

Report of the Assistant Director (Children's Specialist Services) to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 9 September 2015.

C

Subject:**Updated information for Members on the outcomes for Looked After Children at 31 March 2015.****Summary statement:**

The report provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with comprehensive information regarding outcomes for Looked After Children. It is a summary of information known about Looked After Children in Bradford as at 31 March 2015 and draws on the same data used to provide statistical returns to the Department for Education (all figures are provisional, DfE publish the final figures October 2015) . Comparison is made to performance levels at 31 March 2014 and to the first National Statistical Release for 2013-14.

Julie Jenkins
Assistant Director
(Children's Specialist Services)

Portfolio:
Education, Skills and Culture

Report Contacts:
Di Watherston
Group Services Manager
(Social Work Services)
Tel: 01274 437077
di.watherston@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Children's Services



1. Summary

- 1.1 The report provides the Corporate Parenting Panel with comprehensive information regarding outcomes for Looked After Children. It is a summary of information known about Looked After Children in Bradford as at 31 March 2015 and draws on the same data used to provide statistical returns to the Department for Education (all figures are provisional, DfE publish the final figures October 2015) . Comparison is made to performance levels at 31 March 2014 and to the first National Statistical Release for 2013-14.

2. Background

- 2.1 These outcomes are reported on children who are Looked After at 31 March 2015, and have been in care continuously for at least one year on that date.

This is reported annually to the DfE as part of the wider Looked After Children's return (SSDA903) and performance is fed back to Looked After Children's Strategy group to support and improve the work of individual services.

3. Report Issues

- 3.1 The data provided through the Looked After Children return provides information on performance indicators which are used to form part of the National Indicator Set (NIS). Although the NIS as a central entity has been abolished by the Coalition Government, these performance indicators are still a key local tool in managing the quality of outcomes for Looked After Children in the District. They also contribute to Ofsted's annual evaluation of children's services in Bradford and provide key baseline information for any Ofsted inspection of services to Looked After Children that may take place.

Headlines:

- The number of looked after children at 31 March 2015 has remained stable over the year. 878 children were in care at 31 March 2015 which is the same as last year.
- The numbers of adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders have increased since last year.
- Numbers of Young people having a Health Assessment and Dental Check have increased.
- Numbers of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation and in Employment, Education or Training has improved.
- Offending rates have increased

3.2 Overall Numbers

- 3.2.1 There were 878 children looked after at 31 March 2015, which is the same as last year. During the year the number of children being looked after rose to 910 for a short time in July 2014. Nationally at 31 March 2014 there was a 1% increase. The

rate of looked after children per 10,000 population aged 0-17 is at 64 and this has been slowly decreasing since 2012 by effective management of the Looked After population. This compares favourably with statistical neighbours rate of 78.7.

- 3.2.2 There has been a 7.5% decrease in the number of children becoming Looked After at 31 March 294 children started to be looked after, which is a decrease on last year's figure of 318 and 301 ceased to be looked after compared to 326 last year. Nationally at 31 March 2014 there was a 5% increase in the numbers starting to be looked after compared to 31 March 2013. The % of 0-4 year olds becoming looked after has fallen over the last three years; 44% in 2015 compared to 53% in 2013. There has been a steady increase in the % of 5-9 and 10-15 year olds becoming looked after.
- 3.2.3 However, the overall numbers of Looked After Children remain stable due to robust permanency and exit planning.

3.3 Placements and Adoptions

- 3.3.1 Ensuring Looked After children and young people are in stable placements is a key priority for Children's Services. At 31 March 2015, 71% of children and young people were in long term stable and secure placements, which compares favourably with the England and Statistical neighbours' average of 67% and 68.2%. Short term placement stability has improved; 9.2% of children and young people had 3 or more placements in the year compared to 9.5% last year. This compares favourably with statistical neighbours average and England average of 9.5% and 11%.
- 3.3.2 75 children (25%) were adopted at 31 March 2015 this is an increase on last year of 60 (18%). This compares favourably to the national average of 17% and the statistical neighbours average of 22.7% (comparison from the first National Statistical Release for 2013-14).
- 3.3.3 The number of Special Guardianship orders granted also increased from 42 (13%) in 2014 to 49 (16%) in 2015.
- 3.3.4 The average time taken between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family has also improved in the year in question from 606 days in 2013/14 to 554 days in 2014/15.

3.4 Health

3.4.1 Physical Health

- 82% of Looked After children had all their immunisations up to date down from 90% in 2013/14.
- 93% had their teeth checked by a dentist in the year, an increase on last year of 84%.
- 93% of Looked After children had an annual health assessment in the year, an increase compared to last year of 88%.

3.5 Emotional Health

- 3.5.1 It is recognised that Children and Young People who have been abused and suffered loss of their primary carer are at greater risk of poor emotional resilience. Concerns remain for the outcomes of young people leaving care whose future is impacted by issues of poor emotional health which for a minority can lead to social exclusion.
- 3.5.2 The emotional health needs of children and young people (Looked After for more than a year) are assessed through a 'Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). A SDQ generates an individual score for an individual child (between 1 – 40), 0-13 as normal level of emotional need, 13-25 some concerns, 25-40 very concerning. The highest figures are a predictor of emotional difficulties.
- 3.5.3 69% of children aged 4-16 inclusive (who have been Looked After for more than one year) had a SDQ completed, this is an increase on last year of 65%. The average value for completed questionnaires at 31 March 2015 is 13.6. This rate compares favourably with the statistical average rate of 14.
- 3.5.4 To respond to the emotional well being of Looked After children and care leavers Social Care Services have implemented specific partnerships with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS):
- Therapeutically-oriented care programme at Meadowlea Children's Home which focuses on the emotional needs of children and views the child's development process from a broad psychoanalytical perspective as well as biological and social influences.
 - Leaving Care Workers and young people have early access to CAMHS Social Work service to provide preventative therapeutic work or access to specialist CAMHS and Adult Services.

3.6 Children's Homes

- 3.6.1 Changes to the children's Homes Regulations and Ofsted Inspection Framework were introduced in April 2015 with residential care settings and provisions being inspected against a rigorous inspection framework twice a year. Inspectors consider the information that Ofsted has about the service which includes:
- previous inspection reports
 - the home's statement of purpose
 - concerns and complaints received
 - notifications of serious events received
 - written reports following a visit by an independent visitor
 - any quality assurance reports required by regulation
 - any changes to registration, including change of manager
 - any current or recent enforcement activity.

3.6.2 Judgements of the home are made in relation to:

- The Overall Experiences and Progress of Children and Young People living in the home
- How Well Children and Young People are Helped and Protected
- The Impact and Effectiveness of Leaders and Managers

3.6.3 With overall judgements in relation to the care delivered being made using a four-point scale:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

3.6.4 Inspectors will investigate how the manager and staff:

- Understand each child or young person's starting point
- Measure success
- Know they are making a positive difference to children and young people's lives
- Understand and act on the strengths and areas for improvement in practice.

3.6.5 Any judgement of inadequate for the overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home at an inspection of a children's home will lead to an urgent case review. There will also be an urgent case review where the issues identified at an interim inspection give sufficient cause for concern.

Currently Bradford has 11 children's homes:

- 3 homes judged to be Outstanding
- 8 homes judged to be Good
- 1 home judged to Require Improvement

3.7 Achievement

The information on the attainment of Looked After children for the academic year 2014/2015 is not yet available and is the subject of a report to this Committee at its next meeting.

3.8 Positive Contribution

86% of Looked After children participated in their reviews at 31 March 2015 which is a slight increase on last year (85%).

- 96% of Looked After children had all their reviews on time during the previous year; this is slightly lower than last year of 98%.
- The percentage of Looked After young people who had offended in the year has increased; 6.5% in 2015 compared to 5.5% in 2014. There is a dedicated Police Officer working closely with the children's homes to work restoratively and reduce offending and missing episodes.

3.9 Economic Wellbeing

- 3.9.1 At 31 March 2015, 50.2% of Care Leavers aged between 19 and 21 were in education, employment and training, which is an increase on last year of 36%. Bradford performance compares favourably with the England average of 45%, Yorkshire and Humber average of 47% and with statistical neighbours average of 42% (2013-2014 Statistical Release Figures).
- 3.9.2 84.7% of Care Leavers aged between 19 and 21 were living in suitable accommodation; this is an increase on last year figures of 75%. Bradford's figure compares favourably with the England average of 77.8% and the statistical neighbour's average of 81%.
- 3.9.3 The percentage of children leaving care over the age of 16 who remained looked after until their 18th birthday has remained stable across the two years at 75% but the percentage of young people aged 19-21 who were looked after aged and who were in higher education has dropped from 7% to 3.6% across the year. This compares unfavourably against regional (7.8%) and national (6%) comparators.

4. Options

There are none for consideration.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That the Corporate Parenting Panel notes the content of the report.

6. Background Documents

Looked After Children Analysis 2015.

7. Not for Publication Documents

None.

8. Appendices

None.